

Teachings 2010 to 2000 Eckhart-Tolle-Teaching Compilation Part 8 of 8

[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 4:51)

They see only what has become made lifeless through their mind. And so the true, the dimension of being is missing. And they don't know what they are doing when they kill life on the planet because they've already killed it.

They've killed the feeling of their own aliveness because they live exclusively in a conceptualized sense of self, an egoic sense of self. The ability to sense, to feel the deeper being that is the sacredness of life in every life form is not there. They don't find it in themselves, the sacred stillness, the sacred space that is within.

And if you don't find it in yourself, you haven't touched it because you're totally in the mind movement. You cannot recognize the sacredness in others. So humans are suffering from a form of mental illness, collective mental illness, which is to be trapped exclusively in the upper floor of your being.

And so this is the closest, perhaps, if you want to use words, that you can express the truth of this, is to say that when humans engage in such behavior, they are simply manifesting a form of collective illness, mental illness. For hundreds of years, Zen Buddhism actually has occasionally used that word to say the sickness of the mind, use that expression, the dysfunction of humanity, which is such that they will destroy themselves if it doesn't change. So you have to see that cruelty within the context of the whole, which is the illness of humanity.

And when you see it as illness, perhaps a little bit of almost compassion arises. It doesn't make it less dreadful, what is happening. But perhaps when you see it as an illness, there's no longer the need in you to make the people who do this into those who are considered evil.

Always we have to come back to Jesus. They don't know what they are doing. They don't know what they are doing.

And then you can still be, you will feel sad. Of course you will, when you watch that, you will feel the sadness and you can accept that you feel very deeply affected by what you see. But when you see it in the larger context of human illness, you may be able to be free of anger.

And if that is the case, then you may be able to take also some action on the external level. And the only action or the most useful action is not to try and convince people that what they are doing is wrong, but simply to show them what they are doing because not enough people have seen it. Simply to show what is happening.

Show them through disseminating information or whatever. And many humans will be shocked. Many haven't really seen what's happening.

And anybody who is not totally trapped in their minds will feel something and there may be change coming. But the true change happens through enough human beings to go through this inner transformation. Not until then will the collective illness on the planet become healed.

And our gathering here is part of that. Maybe one last question.

[Speaker 3] (4:52 - 5:31)

Good afternoon. My name is Marianne. Thank you for being here.

I read in your book, *The Power of Now*, that women can be especially vulnerable to their pain bodies just before their menstrual period. I recognize that and somehow I feel that it is not only my personal pain body, it's bigger than that. It also relates, I think, to the question that was just asked.

But could you please say something more about that?

[Speaker 1] (5:32 - 15:27)

What you feel there is the, I've spoke before of collective aspects of the pain body. We mentioned countries and so on. And there's also such a thing as the female collective pain body.

Because we've lived in mainly patriarchal societies for several thousand years. Before then, there were women where the female was respected greatly. There were matriarchal societies.

There was a time when most gods were goddesses, they were female. And then as humans moved more and more into their minds, they created male gods more and more. And then the female became more and more devalued.

And so because of violence inflicted on female, on countless women who were over the centuries were treated as slaves, sometimes sold, treated as goods almost, and so not respected. Raped, killed, used, exploited. Of course, that happened also, men also did it to groups of men.

But we're talking at the moment just from that aspect. So as something that we could call the female collective pain body developed, and that's the, many women's pain body, most, probably all women's pain body is partly collective. And so it's when your womanhood manifests itself most clearly through menstruation, which should be a joyful time.

That tends to activate the collective woman pain body in women. And many women are now conscious of that and actually become more alert when it happens because what, how much of your pain body as a woman goes back to your personal pain, and what portion of it is due to the collective female pain body ultimately doesn't matter when it arises and you begin to observe it, you begin to become conscious of it. And many women are now working in that way and are actually becoming more conscious at that time because they know they need to become more alert just as the time approaches, they already know, okay, it's coming.

And then they may feel the first movement as a reaction, as a thought, as an emotion, and then it depends on what level you can catch it with your attention. You no longer need, you don't need to question when you observe it in yourself, is what I'm feeling now collective or personal? It doesn't matter from the perspective of consciousness, it's enough for you to look, you don't need to even know its origin.

This applies to any kind of emotion that arises in you, not just in this context. For it to be transmuted and dissolved, you do not need to know its origin, although sometimes its origin will reveal itself to you as you pay attention to it. But many things that are inside humans, many emotions have their origin at almost at the very beginning when you still lived in the sea perhaps and you got eaten up five million times.

That was already a form of pain. So it goes back, sometimes you cannot trace it back and at other times it will suddenly say, oh, that's where it came from. That's fine.

So allow the origin to reveal itself if it wants to reveal itself. For the process to work, it is not necessary for the origin to reveal itself, although it is nice when it does. So all that is required is your conscious presence as the emotional field becomes activated.

And if possible, don't allow it to rise into your thinking. Once it gets hold of that, then it's more difficult to be present. You may need little reminders.

It really is like, and not just in this context, the female pain body, any manifestation of pain body is really like going to sleep, acting out a dream. You may need little reminders as if you were going into a dream. Sometimes you read strange, you see strange films like that, they enter somebody's, and in the dream, you could have a reminder that you are dreaming.

So you could put little reminders in your home so that when you walk into the bedroom or into the bathroom, you can have a face that looks like the masks, the traditional masks for theater, comedy and tragedy. One mouth goes up, one mouth goes down. You can have one with the mouth down and have a question mark.

Pain body as a little sign to watch because you may be immersed in pain body, walk into your bed, into your bathroom, and on the mirror, you see that image with a question

mark, and then you, oh, might wake you up. There's no guarantee that it will. Another possibility is he will tear it down.

I don't want to hear any more of that nonsense about pain body. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. Or you tell your partner to wake you up when the pain body attack comes.

Wake me up when I fall asleep. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. All right.

So these are all things that arise as presence arises. Those things will arise also in the field of presence. Occasionally, they will obscure presence temporarily.

But now that presence is already active, has become activated in many of you long before you came here. In some of you, perhaps today, presence has become activated in you. There's no going back.

It can only become obscured temporarily. And probably, well, that's fine. At any given moment, see if you can be accepting of that moment.

And see if you can be not a walking pain body, not a walking storyline, but presence. Who you truly are. Consciousness taking on form temporarily as this body and this mind.

But you are more than the body and the conditioned mind. The underlying consciousness. Knowing yourself as that at this moment.

You don't need to be present or surrender for the rest of your life. That would be a problem. Oh no, now I have to surrender for the rest of my life.

I have to be present every day of my life from now on. That would be a big task ahead of you. Stressful.

Am I going to make it? But you don't need to. Only at this moment.

That's not a lot. Thank you so much.

[Speaker 4] (15:31 - 15:31)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (17:37 - 17:50)

It is our great, great honor at Unity FM and here at Unity to welcome our special guest today, Eckhart Tolle.

[Speaker 1] (17:50 - 17:51)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (17:51 - 17:52)

Welcome.

[Speaker 1] (17:52 - 17:53)

Thank you. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (17:56 - 18:50)

Thank you. Well, our, one of our co-founders, Myrtle Fillmore, this has been her vision and Charles's vision that, and to have you here is such an honor. One of the things that she wrote, there's a letter that she wrote, is the most, the oldest handwritten letter that Myrtle has been found by Myrtle Fillmore.

And in it, this is from 1891, and I brought this quote because it speaks so much to what you talk about in both of your books. She says, My dear, you ask why you do not enter into the understanding you so desire. I will tell you, you are already in it, but you think you have some great thing to do to get there.

The kingdom of God is within you. All you need to do is be still and know.

[Speaker 1] (18:52 - 18:53)

Yes, that's right.

[Speaker 2] (18:53 - 18:57)

So that would be, what would you, would you like to add to that or?

[Speaker 1] (18:59 - 28:36)

Well, the human mind has been conditioned over thousands of years to seek fulfillment elsewhere, in space and time, and especially in time, so the human mind has been conditioned to look to the future or the next moment. Future sounds a little abstract. If we say the next moment, then we can actually feel what that means.

It always looks to the next moment, or most of the time, for fulfillment, completion. And in this way, the human mind, the conditioning of the human mind denies life because the only place where life takes place, the only place where life happens is in the present moment now, and outside the now there is no life. And even past and future don't actually exist outside human thought forms.

Now, this may sound a little bit difficult at first to believe because past and future seem so real, but all you have to, this is not a philosophical exercise, it's easier than that. All you have to ask yourself is whether you've ever experienced past or future. And then if you look closely, you realize all you ever experienced was now, and when it happened, it

was now because it's only in this place of now where anything can happen.

And when the future comes, it can only come as the now. So, past and future are thought forms. They may be necessary on a practical level here, we can make appointments and get together here at this particular time, but when it goes beyond practical, then they actually represent a great limitation when they take over our lives.

Then time, past and future I call time, time then takes over our consciousness, and so this is the time-bound state of consciousness that most people are possessed by, and it is an essential aspect of the egoic consciousness. The ego lives in and through time, ego being the false mind-made sense of self. And so it comes as a surprise to people when they realize, well, it's actually true, my life is always now, and is never not now, and never will be not now, never has been.

That is not just an idea that you add to your mind, the fact that life is always now, this is almost like a little powerful pointer, it's always now, and really that almost stops your mind, if you really get that, to experience the truth of that statement, you have to step beyond the mind, because by continuing to think analytically, is it actually true that there's only the now, let me think, it's a pointer that takes you, when you truly experience the reality of that, actually takes you into the now, and there's an opening inside, there's a space that opens up inside, and you say, this is it? And what is this? You can't quite at first define what this is, but all you know for the time being is this is life, life itself is experienced now.

And so, for most people, now is what happens in the now, and that's why people believe that there are many different moments, every hour consists of many different moments, every day consists of many moments, but if you look more closely, of course there are not many moments, there's only ever this moment, and the reason why people believe there are many moments is because they confuse the now with what happens in the now. What happens, of course, changes continuously.

The now itself, however, is something that is, the moment we define it through words, of course, we limit it, and yet, knowing that words are not quite it, or words can only point to it, we can continue to talk for a little bit about the now, so the now then is the space in which everything happens, or the light in which everything appears. And the light in which things appear and disappear, they come, this is how everything continues to change in life, the impermanence of what the Buddha speaks of, everything continuously changes, it comes into the light of now, but the essence of every experience is the light of consciousness, which is the space of now. So the secret of now is that it is the formless foundation of all manifested life, it is the unmanifested formless dimension in which the manifested appears, and in essence, you are that light, and knowing that yourself as that is not done through thinking, it is not a thought that you add to your mind and say, okay, I'm light, okay, now I know it.

You can only know yourself as the light if thought stops, even if only for this moment, and you sense that underneath all the things that happen, sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions, feelings, there remains the substratum, which is space, the space of consciousness itself, which we could also call the stillness. Every word only shows you a tiny aspect of it, it's not it, it's stillness and it's vaster than stillness. It's consciousness, but even that limits it because it's only a word.

So finding that space in yourself, and this is what the quote is about, you can only find that space in yourself now because essentially it is the now. So who you are at the deepest level is inseparable from the now, and so that's the deepest meaning of now, and it's a realization, just one glimpse is enough to change your life. It doesn't mean that the time-bound consciousness won't take you over again, it will probably happen, but you've had the glimpse, that is the initiation of the awakening process, and anybody who can see the truth of this must already have had the glimpse, or in the moment of words like these being spoken, some people at that moment have the glimpse and wake up.

And so you realize the essence of yourself has nothing to do with the form of yourself, the body, whatever thoughts go through your mind, whatever emotions you have, that's fine, that's a level of form, I call it the human part, but we are human beings. Human is form, being is formless. Most humans know only the human part and identify totally with the human part, which is the physical form, the thoughts forms, the emotional forms.

You identify with external forms, possessions, achievements, this, that, and that becomes a... But really, external forms are also thought forms, they get translated into mental images. So you're really always identified with mental images, even your my car, you're not really identified with my car, but with the mental image of my car.

So that is the world of form, that's the human, and if that's all you know, then you're lost in the world, because this world is the world of form. And most people still live like that, lost in the world, which implies lost in their minds. That's where the world starts.

And the world being the world of form, and underneath it all is the timeless dimension, the spiritual dimension, the sacred dimension. And that's the essence of who you are, and that is the deepest meaning of now.

[Speaker 2] (28:38 - 28:41)

And we access that through the stillness, through the silence?

[Speaker 1] (28:42 - 29:18)

Yes, you could say the stillness, the silence is it, but you cannot, of course, ever objectify it. You can't say, there it is. That's why Jesus said, the kingdom of heaven does not come with signs to be perceived.

Because if it's a sign, you say, oh, there it is, the kingdom of heaven, there it's coming. It doesn't. First, of course, it cannot come, because it's already here.

And it can't be there, because it's the essence of here, it's here.

[Speaker 2] (29:18 - 29:32)

Well, to experience that, do we have to, when I think of going in the silence, I think of this quiet, meditative state. Is it possible to experience that as we are doing in our life?

[Speaker 1] (29:33 - 30:40)

Yes. And this is the part of the art of living in this world, of living, of conscious living in this world, so that you are able to balance in your life the two dimensions, form and formlessness, world and spirit, so that you provide, you are a bridge, so to speak. You, as this human being, are the bridge between the being and the human, the world, form and formlessness.

And across this bridge flows something into this world from the timeless, sacred dimension that is not to be found, it is not to be found somewhere in space or time. God, you could say. God is not found in space or time.

God is not hiding somewhere in outer space. We know that by now. Even conventional Christianity is beginning to realize that God is not out there somewhere.

Although... Anyway, let's not...

[Speaker 4] (30:41 - 30:41)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (30:48 - 34:03)

So, we are here bridging the two worlds, and through you, as you live consciously, the dimension of the sacred or the divine or the timeless flows through you, through your words, if you are conscious and present, through your actions, not necessarily big significant actions, every action is significant, even lifting a cup, consciousness can flow into that, presence can flow into that, into power, when you interact with other humans, and you are not preparing mentally what you are going to say, you are not judging them in any way, you are the space for them. That means, at that moment, something through you as this form, something from the formless, the sacred dimension of God, flows into this world of form. And in a strange way, it gradually transforms the world of form.

The world of form loses its density and heaviness. And what I'm describing is actually the deepest meaning of love, because when this flows into what you say, do, into your interactions, that space is essentially what love is, not the egoic understanding of love,

which says, I need you, don't you ever dare leave me. But the love that recognizes that whatever you see out there in the world of form is a manifestation or an appearance in disguise, disguised as that particular temporary form, of who you are in your essence, on the formless.

So there's always a self-recognition when that dimension is open and flows through you into this world. When I say you, at this moment I mean the form of you, which is ultimately not who you are, it's just an appearance. And that's our mission then, is to bring that dimension of consciousness into this world, and that is what the universe wants.

And if we bring this dimension of consciousness into what we do and say, especially into interactions, we are fulfilling not only our purpose as humans, we are fulfilling the purpose of the universe, because the universe is moving continuously towards the greater and greater expression of consciousness. And gradually, I don't want to go too much into this, but my feeling is that gradually matter is becoming, through this, matter gradually becomes spirit and loses its density.

[Speaker 2] (34:04 - 34:17)

Well, would you like to lead us into that stillness? I know we would all be very honored to experience that, and it is our tradition in Unity to begin with prayer and stillness and meditation.

[Speaker 1] (34:17 - 40:21)

Well, we can, but the strange thing also happens when these words are spoken, you can actually experience in the background, you're hearing the words, you understand the words without needing to analyze them, and in the background of your perceptions, there is already the space. So even as we speak, in order to find the space, it is not necessary, it can be helpful from time to time to go into stillness, wonderful thing to do, but it is not confined to moments of stillness. The question is whether you are able to be aware in the background of your life and that means, of course, now, whether you can be aware of this thing that cannot be defined, we could call it, can you be aware of the consciousness that you are?

Can you be aware of the awareness that you are? Not the awareness of something, the awareness of awareness. Can you sense the presence that you are?

Yes, and again, it's not as Jesus said, you can't say, oh, yeah, I've got it now, or you can't say, okay, I have achieved presence, and then claim, because you can only have it now. You can't say, now I have it, I'm an achiever of presence, or even if you say, I'm enlightened, it's dangerous to say that because you're forming another form identity. You give yourself another form identity and imply that I'm going to be present forever.

But there's only now, so the only question is, are you able to sense this background to all experience right now and still be able to deal with things, perceive things, even take action so that there's always a stillness in the background, even while you talk to people. What do we need to do now? One can lose oneself so easily when you begin to use your mind, start words flow, they come out of you, they come out of the other person, and there's an enormous momentum behind the human mind, thousands of years of unconsciousness, and so the human mind is used to drawing your entire consciousness and using it, making thoughts, more and more thoughts.

So for many people still, all their consciousness is thought, takes the form of thought. They are not aware that underneath thought there is the vastness of unconditioned consciousness, out of which thoughts are not separate from consciousness, they are a form that consciousness takes. And then the question is whether consciousness identifies completely with a form and loses itself consciousness, or whether the forms can arise and you are still conscious of the background, of the space of awareness.

And, as you say, it can be helpful at first to find it in moments of, when you say, OK, I'm going to be still now, still. And perhaps many of you, perhaps already practicing that, this is an advanced spiritual group, so I'll tell you what it is. It's to be able to simply say, there's nothing to think about now, so why should I think?

There's no need to think. To voluntarily say, I will surrender right now. I'll surrender thought, relinquish thought.

And what's left? Now, two things are possible now. You can either fall below thought, or you rise above thought, that is an alertness, relaxed alertness, still alertness, you rise above thought.

And you can contemplate, you can then, this could be a spiritual practice, you can practice perceiving things through stillness. Without naming, without labeling. Whether you use auditory perception, or visual perception, or tactile, it doesn't matter, the predominant sense for most people is the visual.

So, you look around, you see everything, you even somehow know what it is you're looking, but you're not defining it, and limiting it by calling it something. That means the mystery of life is still there. You have not reduced the mystery and the incredible beauty of this by calling it something, and then believing if you attach a name to it, you know what it is.

There's always, this is a great illusion, if you call it, I don't know what that plant is, but if I knew it, if you call it something, Ficus. Yes. And then, most people believe now they know what it is.

True. Nothing has happened, you've just attached a sound to it.

[Speaker 2] (40:22 - 40:23)

And it's not even a real ficus.

[Speaker 1] (40:25 - 44:51)

Yeah. But even inanimate objects, even inanimate objects are intensely alive. Everything is mysterious.

And the mystery is there surrounding you, the universe, and the delusion is that by naming it, that suddenly you know what it is. So here the spiritual practice is to refrain from naming and labeling mentally. And that's the beauty.

You practice at first in easy environments, out in nature is helpful, easier than being in a city, because in a city everything is man-made and can stimulate thought, especially you see writing everywhere, advertising, and that stimulates thought. It's very hard to look at something written and then not let it become a thought. You'd have to turn it around, upside down, and then perhaps it works.

But even then the mind will try to figure out what's inside. So out in nature, anything natural, just looking, listening. And this is being there fully, no matter where it is.

You're absolutely present then. You're above thought in the state of alert presence. And everything becomes alive.

You suddenly realize that when you were immersed in thinking and always labeling everything mentally, the universe was no longer alive to you. You couldn't sense the aliveness of the universe anymore. And unfortunately millions still live like that.

They inhabit a universe that has become deadened by mental abstractions, continuous thinking, because every thought is some form of abstraction. It's not it. So the practice then is to bring that alert presence into perceptions and look around.

Do it in your room too, when you sit in your bedroom or your living room. Sit there for a while and just look around. Just to practice, can I perceive without this compulsion to label everything?

And that's a beautiful thing to do. Your perceptions become innocent. This is why Jesus said, unless you become like little children, you cannot enter the kingdom of God.

He means that those are little children whose minds have not yet started to conceptualize everything and judge everything. And yet it's not quite the same as a little child, because you have already transcended thought. The little child is still at a pre-thought level, and you have gone through it.

So there's an added depth or dimension to that state, but it has certain similarities with

the state of the innocent perception of a child. And imagine if you can bring that into human interactions, so that whoever you meet, any human being you meet, you don't label them. You just are there as the space for that perception of that.

And so another way of putting this is that you are here as the aware space rather than as a person. So the aware space, the being part of the human, becomes more important than the human. The human is still honored to the level of form.

Yes, you have a name, you have a personal history, but you no longer derive your identity from your personal history, which after all is only a story you tell yourself in your head. And certain emotions still go with that story. That's your personal history.

Your personal history consists of thought and your photo albums. And your photo albums are not going to survive for that long either. Two generations later, they end up in some antique store, and then somebody looks at them and all they see is some human form.

Who's that?

[Speaker 2] (44:51 - 45:15)

I wonder who that was. We were talking today with Eckhart Tolle, and more information is online at www.eckharttolle.com. We thank you for being with us for this very special edition of The Leading Edge.

So Eckhart, what would the role then be of having the multitudes gather in prayer, or having multiple people gather in the silence?

[Speaker 1] (45:17 - 47:42)

There's an energy field that arises when a group of people, even just two, come together and enter the state of presence. And that affects, not only does it strengthen the presence in each member of the group, it helps, it's not presence, but it's not your possession, by the way. One might sometimes say, your presence or my presence, that's only a way of speaking.

Ultimately, there isn't your presence or my presence, there's only presence. You could say it's the divine presence, or the presence of God in this world. And it can be very helpful to come together in a group with the purpose of being present, so you're present together.

The difficulty often arises when the period of stillness comes to an end and the group starts to speak again. The moment you start to speak, then the challenge is not to lose that sense of stillness or presence even while you start to think and speak again. And that can be quite a challenge, because the momentum of the mind can be so overpowering, especially when you start discussing something.

So after sitting together in presence, somebody says, OK, now, let's discuss the meaning of presence. Well, I think it... No, no, you're wrong.

And before you know it, two minutes later, you're completely in some mind stream, identified with some mind stream. Off you go, and suddenly you're fighting with somebody who is identified with a slightly different mind stream. And so the presence is gone.

Oh, where has it gone? It's become obscured. You were not alert enough to remain.

The alertness was lost. Alertness is consciousness without thought. Presence ultimately is just bare, pure consciousness.

[Speaker 2] (47:43 - 48:06)

So this morning we were all gathered here in the Silent Unity Chapel, and Reverend Dorothy Pearson led us into the silence in a very powerful way. And I had this experience, and I'm wondering if you've ever had this experience, where in the silence there is such a feeling of being connected and feeling the presence of Source, that for me, I get very emotional.

[Speaker 1] (48:06 - 48:15)

Yes, it touches all levels. You can feel it physically, even. You can feel it on the emotional level.

It reverberates on all levels.

[Speaker 2] (48:15 - 48:20)

So is that an emotional release? What is that emotion that we feel?

[Speaker 1] (48:20 - 48:51)

Well, it's like, I would say, it's an expression of love. That's how I experience that. When love arises, because this is how love arises, sometimes it touches the emotion, and you cry.

It doesn't mean you're sad. There's great joy in that. So the joy can be so overpowering that it touches the emotional level also.

And it's very beautiful.

[Speaker 2] (48:51 - 49:23)

We have many questions that people through our online community, the UnityFM online community, and those that are here with us, many, many questions people have for you.

This one is from Shirley Bowman, and she's a member of our online community. And she says that in your book, you say that there is nothing you can do to prepare yourself for attaining enlightenment, and we've talked about that.

So what about prayer and meditation and what Unity calls the silence? Are those processes that is the intention for those to lead us to enlightenment?

[Speaker 1] (49:24 - 49:24)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (49:24 - 49:25)

How does that connect?

[Speaker 1] (49:25 - 49:58)

Yes. In fact, what I say in the book is that there's nothing you can do to bring about awakening. Awakening is the first separation of consciousness from thinking.

And so somebody who is able to go into stillness and practice stillness has already gone through that. So that person has already begun to awaken. But if we're doing it in order to...

That means you haven't found the stillness yet. You're trying to find the stillness, but you can't find it.

[Speaker 5] (49:59 - 50:01)

More silence, more silence.

[Speaker 1] (50:01 - 50:58)

Yes, it would be very frustrating because you would continue to come here, I just can't get there. And then after a while you would stay home and you can't do it anymore. And then you have to wait for grace.

In some form the grace will then come, perhaps not by you going to a group, it might come in a different form. Maybe you suddenly slip, you're walking on a wet road, and suddenly you fall and whatever, you break your arm or you don't, and suddenly your mind stops. The shock is so great that for a few seconds you're there in presence.

Oh, that's it. That would be the beginning of the awakening. And then you'll be able to come to a group and you've had a glimpse.

[Speaker 2] (50:59 - 51:00)

Can we do it without suffering?

[Speaker 1] (51:00 - 51:01)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (51:01 - 51:06)

Can we do it without the dark night of the soul? For those of us happy people, can we get there eventually? Yes.

[Speaker 1] (51:07 - 52:10)

Most people here probably to a greater or lesser extent have already gone through that phase of suffering. And for many of us it's only because of the suffering that we've gone through we are here now. If we hadn't had it we would still be completely identified with the egoic self, the little me, and pursuing its little aims and ambitions and problem making and so on.

So most of us have gone through that stage and the more you're able to invite presence into your life, the less you need suffering to force you into presence or to break the egoic shell. Because for some people the density of the ego is just enormous and they need some kind of shock. I don't know if I've met any recently.

[Speaker 4] (52:11 - 52:13)

Maybe a few.

[Speaker 1] (52:14 - 52:34)

There was a spiritual teacher in India who called people with, I don't know if some of you know Indian terminology, you can add the suffix G to a name as a form of respect. So if somebody is called Krishna, you can call them Krishnaji, which is a form of respect. So he called people with big egos, Egojis.

[Speaker 2] (52:38 - 52:40)

As a sign of respect. Respect the ego.

[Speaker 1] (52:42 - 52:43)

Accept the ego.

[Speaker 2] (52:43 - 53:44)

Accept the ego. Here on Unity Campus, of course, the grounds are spectacular and I was walking yesterday, of course, greeting the new earth and there is a garden not far from

where we're staying here. It's the Lowell Fillmore Garden.

And there is a plaque and a poem is on it that is written by Lowell. And as I read it, I thought, this is a new earth. So I brought it to share just to hear your comments on this.

He writes, when for a purpose I had prayed and prayed and prayed until my words seemed worn and bare with arduous use and all my fervor and persistence brought no hope, I paused to give my weary brain a rest and ceased my anxious cry. In that still moment, after self had tried and failed, there came a glorious vision of God's power and lo, my prayer was answered in that hour.

[Speaker 4] (53:46 - 53:47)

That's right here on campus.

[Speaker 2] (53:48 - 53:59)

Like that's a new earth. Is that what you're saying? Because we've all had those fervent prayers.

We pray and pray and pray and pray. And that doesn't lead us to where we want to go. Why?

[Speaker 1] (54:00 - 56:18)

Well, for many people, prayer is still part of the old conditioning of your consciousness, which basically means you're looking to some future for fulfillment. Please let this happen. Then I'll be happy.

Please give me that. Then I'll be happy. Please don't let that happen.

And then I'll be happy. So the old mind structure which believes it needs the future for fulfillment is still operating even when people think they're being spiritual. And so they don't realize that the very same structure that worldly people are possessed by, they say, I can only get that bigger house or better job, and only people could recognize that I'm the greatest, then I'll be happy.

Or if I see my picture in People magazine, then I'll be happy. And it's the same mind structure, or the same mind structure even with spiritual people. Whereas this prayer is where the old conditioning still operates.

It could also operate in people who are seeking enlightenment. Now that seems something more advanced than asking in prayer to be given something so that you can be happy, not realizing that the only place where you can be fulfilled and happy is now. You just have to go deeper into it.

So if you are spiritual, then you might think, okay, I need you to hear of enlightenment or liberation, whatever it's called, salvation. Okay, I need to attain that. I need to become enlightened.

You read books about it and so on. And you can become very knowledgeable. And what is actually stopping you from realizing enlightenment or awakening or whatever is the belief that it's going to come at some future moment.

It's only when future is surrendered that it opens up. So it's only when you let go of that old mind structure that says, I need time.

[Speaker 2] (56:19 - 56:30)

So for example, let's say someone is scheduled for surgery. So they might want to go into a prayerful state about a future upcoming surgery. What would be the best way?

[Speaker 1] (56:31 - 1:05:27)

The most powerful way is to absolutely not leave this moment, to refuse to budge from just now, so that time virtually collapses. And then there's such intensity behind that state, and that can be there also if you believe that the body may go soon, may dissolve soon, not much time left. So there's no point in looking for something in time.

If you know that the body might go in two weeks' time, two months' time, then there's no point in looking towards time for some fulfillment. So then it can happen that even unspiritual people who've spent their whole lives in worldly pursuits are suddenly driven, otherwise they become extremely miserable and unhappy, the depths of depression, of course. But even then it has happened, can happen, that even unspiritual people are driven out of time into the now.

And suddenly the sacred, the spiritual dimension opens up in them, and they go, and you know, you can sense the transformation. Light shines through the decaying form, and it's an amazing thing. I've met a few people who, as they were going towards the dissolution of the body, entered that state of absolute intense presence, which is not a forced state.

It's not a state of, I need to be present. It's a very relaxed intensity. And that's also where the spiritual master lives, so to speak, has his or her home, which is in the present moment, always aligned with now.

No matter what appears in the now, you say yes to the appearance of the now. If the appearance of now is a difficult person, an ego G, then that's what is now. You don't say, you should behave differently.

No, of course, action is always possible. You can remove yourself from the ego G, and look the other way, or leave the room. But if you can't, you're stuck in an elevator with

the ego G, then you have to say, there you are, you are this now, the form that this now takes.

So the primordial spiritual practice is, whether you do it shortly before death, hopefully you do it sooner, hence the ancient dictum, die before you die. This is the collapse of time. Time then only has a practical purpose, but is no longer important in your life.

You're not looking for time to find yourself. You can only find yourself now, because you are the presence. And so there's an uncompromising yes to whatever form this moment takes.

And even if it seems difficult, and even if it seems limiting, because the world of form is always limiting in one way or another, you cannot find the limitless in the world of form. Even if you achieve everything that you wanted to achieve, wealth, great fame, everybody loves me, everybody admires me, then you will find, even there you will find, your new life situation would have new limitations. You cannot find the limitless.

Oprah can't go for walks in the street or go shopping, she can't go out by herself, she would get mobbed. So that's a big limitation. What great joy there is in just walking around, looking around.

Can't do it anymore. Big limitation. So if she had thought that fame would make her happy, she would now become unhappy again.

So whatever you achieve in the world of form, sooner or later you will hit upon... It doesn't mean you cannot do things to go beyond certain limitations in your life. Scarcity, there may be a period in your life when you do things to go beyond scarcity, or healing your body, there may be things you can do to heal your body.

These are all wonderful things. But no matter what you do on the level of form, you will always hit upon some limitation. So when you encounter the limitation, it appears in the now, you say, OK, this is what is.

You don't judge it, you don't run away from it. And sometimes, for some people, the limitation is drastic. The body may become incapacitated, it might not heal.

Some people may experience healing, but not everybody experiences healing. Or some limitation where everything that you have worked on for 25 years, 30 years of your life, collapses around you. You pick up your phone and say, How are my shares?

The stockbroker says, It's all gone. The stock market has collapsed. And your house has collapsed.

Your wife has left you. No, this is what is. And if you bring an acceptance to the limitations that arise in the now, the very limitations become an opening into the space.

Because the surrender and the acceptance of something that is seen as inevitable, and the form of this present moment is always inevitable because everything is as it is. At this moment, it is as it is. You can't argue with that.

You can take action, yes. But right now, is means is. It's already is.

And not to recognize the is-ness and become one with the is-ness means to be out of alignment with life. So if you recognize... All you have to accept is the is-ness of this moment.

It doesn't mean you can't take action. But right now, this is what is. And then action arises out of a state of acceptance.

And enormous empowerment flows into it, not out of a state of negativity. But the important thing is, when you accept the form, no matter what limitation it seems to be, completely, the so-called limitation becomes an opening into the inner space. Because through the acceptance of the outer limitation, the inner space of the formless opens up.

This is how sometimes people have suffered enormously, were driven into awakening and enlightenment through their suffering. They were driven to a point where they just couldn't struggle or couldn't have any more resistance to the suffering because they realized at some point, the suffering arises not because of what's going on, but my resistance to what's going on. And so, surrender happens.

With surrender, the inner space opens up. The stillness underneath all that. And then, the very limitation becomes an open door.

I believe that's the meaning of the crucified Jesus on the cross, because the meaning of the cross is that it's an expression of the most extreme limitation that a human being can encounter, the most extreme suffering, totally helpless. So the cross is a torture instrument, but for some reason, the cross is also a symbol for the divine. And at first, this might seem very strange, especially if you come from outer space, you're not used to it, you see it for the first time.

How is it that the humans have made the torture instrument into a symbol for the divine? And that is because behind the suffering that is totally accepted, not my will, but thy will be done, not the will of the little me, there's an acceptance. And through the acceptance, the very thing that was the torture instrument becomes the divine.

It opens up. And that's the transmutation of suffering.

[Speaker 2] (1:05:27 - 1:05:49)

Yes. We've had many of our questions relate to prayer, and this one in particular connects to what you're talking about, because it's asking, this is from our audience

today, what is prayer to those who are attempting to live in the now? And who are we praying to, and is it a monologue?

If we're living in the now, what is prayer?

[Speaker 1] (1:05:51 - 1:07:22)

Prayer, of course, is many different things according to where you are at in your consciousness. And as long as a person is still not, has not yet realized his or her oneness with the divine, then you're at a stage where the divine is approached on the level of duality. And for those people, prayer can be helpful up to a point until they need to let go of it.

So, if you still see God as outside of you somewhere, then you're addressing God or asking for something. But increasingly, as you realize your essential oneness with the source, then your prayer would change and perhaps would become more simple. And so perhaps would just be little pointers that you use sometimes to remind yourself of the oneness.

Some lessons in A Course in Miracles, for example, have nice pointers like, let me remember who I am. Let me be still. These can be little pointers that take you into the reality of the realization of oneness.

[Speaker 2] (1:07:22 - 1:07:24)

In Unity, we talk about affirmative prayer.

[Speaker 1] (1:07:25 - 1:07:26)

Affirmative prayer, that's right.

[Speaker 2] (1:07:26 - 1:07:27)

The knowing.

[Speaker 1] (1:07:27 - 1:07:46)

Yes, yes, and that can be helpful. So, personally, I don't use the dualistic prayer, but occasionally affirmations come into my head as just spontaneous thoughts, and that's beautiful.

[Speaker 2] (1:07:47 - 1:08:05)

Well, David from our online community says that, you suggest that we are not our thoughts. The filmers have been quoted as saying that every thought is a prayer. He says, well, both statements resonate with me since I struggle with reconciling them.

Are we separate from even our intentional, positive, prayerful thoughts?

[Speaker 1] (1:08:06 - 1:10:41)

Now, thought, of course, for most people in the old consciousness, thought is a manifestation of the old conditioning of your mind. It comes from the past, and all the thought structures are repetitive, to a large extent, negative. They feed the ego, which needs, of course, the negativity, which needs to have problems, which needs to have enemies.

So the continuous thought activity that most people are immersed in, involuntary and compulsive, they don't even know they're immersed in thought activity because they're so identified with thought activity that is who they are, or think they are. So, for those people, thought is totally repetitive, and it tends to recreate, also, experiences, because thought is creative, so you are identified with certain conditioned thinking, so no matter what you do, you create a similar reality because you're still totally identified with the same thought structures. So people, for example, they think, OK, I need to get out of this relationship, and then they have another relationship and get married to another person, and finally, and after a little while, you see, you've recreated the same thing.

And some people get married three, four, five times, and they recreate always the same thing. And some people even recreate very abusive partners sometimes, and they think, OK, finally, marriage number three, I finally found this person is not abusive, and after a few months, he or she turns out to be abusive. The same thoughts that you are immersed in tend to create the same reality, and so the awakening is the realization that there is conditioned thinking, the voice in the head, continuously going through your mind, interpreting your experiences according to your past.

So whatever you experience, there's a filter of your thinking, and you don't really experience the world, only in a very remote and indirect way, you really only then ever experience your thinking, the structure of your thoughts. You only ever really experience the past in you. It's a dreadful state to be in.

[Speaker 2] (1:10:42 - 1:10:44)

For most of us, yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:10:45 - 1:11:07)

And it's called normal, normal human consciousness. And this is why for many humans, unless they begin to awaken spiritually, no real change ever happens. And even if you win in the lottery, it's not real change.

It just means you have the same drama and the same unhappiness in a luxury environment.

[Speaker 2] (1:11:10 - 1:11:12)

Until we can recreate that old reality.

[Speaker 1] (1:11:12 - 1:11:17)

Yes, until you lose the luxury environment because your old thoughts are to do with scarcity.

[Speaker 2] (1:11:18 - 1:11:33)

And that is one of the fundamental, one of our basic unity teachings, is that our thoughts do create. That thoughts held in mind produce after their kind. And so part of the spiritual discipline that we talk about is, how do we become conscious in guiding our thoughts?

[Speaker 1] (1:11:34 - 1:15:28)

And this, of course, is why so little change happens in the world so far, because the old thoughts are recreating the old reality. If you look at human history, 20th century history, dreadful. And the warfare that goes on.

But some change is coming in, it's true. So this is the fundamental shift that begins to happen when you're aware that there is old conditioned thinking that is continuously coloring your experiences, that is continuously interpreting your relationships, misinterpreting your relationships, imposing your own past on your present relationships. And so it's recreating the same madness again and again.

So whatever you, all your interpretations are erroneous, because they are colored by the past in you. And this is why the course in miracles, for example, starts with little exercises, which, for example, tells you to look around the room and say, I see only the past in this mug. I see only the past in this table.

I see only the past in this carpet. Seems strange at first, but it's attempting to make you aware that this is what operates in you so that you can become free. And then it has another lesson which says, nothing I see in this room means anything.

This is one of the very early lessons in the course. Nothing I see in this room means anything. Why is that a lesson?

Because it's attempting to remove the meaning that you impose on the world through your old conditioning. So this is all the old thought that recreates the old reality. And then, at some point, awakening begins to happen.

You begin to be aware of your thoughts. It means you're not free yet, but a little bit of freedom has come in. And then you can, sometimes, you can already become aware of

the most obvious, repetitive, negative, life-denying thoughts that have been going around in your head for years and years and years.

And suddenly, once you bring the awareness to it, the thoughts lose their intensity. And at some point, you can choose to recognize this as an old thought and say, oh, there's another old thought. And you can let go of it.

You can replace it with another thought. Or you can simply be present, even better. Just bring presence where before there was a thought that said, oh, he's a jerk.

I know this kind of person. I've met so many of them. So immediately you relate to this person through this judgment.

And he may not be. On a deeper level, he isn't. But even on a surface level, he may not be.

It may just be your interpretation. And then you recognize the thought, and then you can say, well, I honor the divinity in this human being. And that improves your relationships.

And it goes even deeper if you can be simply present. And no judgment at all. Just be the aware presence and listen to this person or look at this person and bring that into the relationship.

Then you become free of karma. Karma is all the old conditioning you carry around inside you that you are unconscious of, with which the past is recreated again and again. And karma can only dissolve through the arising of presence.

That's the miracle of human transformation.

[Speaker 2] (1:15:29 - 1:16:38)

We're talking with Eckhart Tolle, the best-selling author of *A New Earth Awakening to Your Life's Purpose*, online at www.eckharttolle.com. We thank you for joining us for this special edition of *The Leading Edge*. I'm Mindy Odlin, and we'll be back with more in just a moment.

Welcome back to *The Leading Edge*. I am Mindy Odlin, and this is a very special presentation of *The Leading Edge*. Our guest today, best-selling author Eckhart Tolle.

We've been talking about prayer, about presence, and I know many people from our audience today. We are here at the Silent Unity Chapel at Unity Village. They've been asking questions.

We have many people from our Unity FM online community asking questions. And this is one that just really jumped out to me because it's one that I want to know the answer to, too. This is from our audience today.

It says that they were listening to an interview with Barbara Walters on NPR this morning, and she says that she always asks people, what's the biggest misconception that people have about you? I would love to know. I get to be Barbara Walters here for a moment.

What is the biggest misconception that people have about you?

[Speaker 1] (1:16:39 - 1:22:44)

Well, there are probably different kinds depending where people are coming from. But I believe one is that they see me as special or enlightened. So there's a form identity that's created and projected that is almost the opposite of the reality because the reality of who you are is by relinquishing any kind of conceptual identity and any sense that you as this form is special, that you are more special than somebody else.

Enlightenment, that somebody is enlightened, is itself a contradiction. Enlightenment means that the sense of self, of I, the erroneous, the false, mind-made I, has become transparent or given way to the light of consciousness that shines through. The light of consciousness is nobody's achievement or possession.

So even to say I have achieved enlightenment is a big error. It means you haven't? Nobody achieves enlightenment.

It's only when the self that claims enlightenment gets out of the way or becomes at least transparent enough so that it doesn't cause problems anymore. Then that which is beyond the form shines through and that is the power. It's not my power.

The misconception is that this is my power. And of course it's happened sometimes even to people who have touched that and have that power flow through them. At some point their mind came back and identified with it and they've got another conceptual identity as me as very special.

And then the power becomes obscured again. It's like the clouds are coming back and obscure the sun. And the clouds are, of course, the stream of thinking and you have a new conceptual identity.

And it's more likely to happen to spiritual teachers who are surrounded only by disciples or followers and so they project certain things onto the teachers and continuously bombarded with projections. You are the greatest. And then after a few years, some remnant of egoic consciousness gets triggered and he begins to believe, he or she, that this is true.

So it's continuously going back into being nobody in particular. For example, being a spiritual teacher is not an identity as I see it, people believe this is my identity, but it's only an identity, it's only a function while the so-called teaching happens. Even the

teaching doesn't come from this form, it's a process.

If there was nobody here, I would have nothing to say. The words come out because there's a space here that pulls out the words. I don't come here with some cumulative knowledge and this is what I'm going to say.

Nobody here, nothing, it is complete, just a space. I don't know anything. And then when I go away from here, the function is relinquished.

The important thing is then not to carry the conceptual identity of me being a spiritual teacher, because then I would still be a spiritual teacher when I'm walking around the supermarket and I would feel special. So always coming back to, I am just the, I am the space for this. I am, so it's no thing, no body in particular.

That's the main, so the misconception is the projection of specialness. That's how it is. And so when people, sometimes people when they come to talk, they feel an enormous arising inside of aliveness and presence and they might think it comes from here, but it can only come from within them.

Perhaps something that's here can pull it out, but it must be in you if you can sense it. Whatever you feel is there and the other person must also be in you. For example, stillness.

In order to be aware, for example, that there's silence in this room, for a moment you have to be silent inside. It's only the silence that can be aware of the silence, or the stillness which can be aware of the silence outside. If you have no stillness, you don't even know that there's silence because there's mental noise.

So the, yes, the strange thing is the specialness, that's the specialness as opposed to others who are not special, that's the delusion. I do feel special, but I know that everybody is equally special. So there's a sense of there's something very, this life that I am is precious and it's everybody's identity.

[Speaker 2] (1:22:46 - 1:24:09)

You mentioned yourself, the role of spiritual teacher, and I noticed in today's Daily Word, the Daily Word has this uncanny ability to provide the perfect word on a perfect day. And so here we are with Eckhart Tolle, the author of A New Earth, awakening to your life's purpose. And the Daily Word today is purpose.

And it says, I love what I do and I do it with purpose. As I reflect upon my talents and interests, which is what you were talking about, that you are a spiritual teacher, that is a role you play, the activities that bring me joy and fulfillment, I realize that these are the things that give shape to my purpose in life. And each one is a gift from God meant to be developed and shared.

Each new day I welcome the opportunity to put my spiritual gifts into practice, to grow them and expand the blessing that they are. I confidently share my talents with the people around me with commitment and enthusiasm. When I love what I do and I do it with purpose, I am a blessing to the world.

I am a unique and divine expression of spirit. My life is filled with purpose and meaning as I develop and share my spiritual gifts with others. So could you talk about what is a spiritual gift?

Because it does seem like there are those of us who are spiritual teachers, there are those of us who are healers, there are those of us who nurture in different ways. How does that tie into what you were saying?

[Speaker 1] (1:24:10 - 1:24:44)

As I say in the book, I see there's your inner purpose and your outer purpose. Outer purpose varies from person to person. It's to do with your activity, your outer function in this world.

Inner purpose is primary. It's the foundation for a satisfying and fruitful outer purpose. So inner purpose is the same for everybody.

Inner purpose, and of course the subtitle to the book is Awakening to Your Inner Purpose.

[Speaker 2] (1:24:44 - 1:24:47)

Awakening to Your Life's Purpose. You read this, right?

[Speaker 1] (1:24:51 - 1:25:18)

The subtitle actually was the idea of the editor. He called and said, I've had a great idea and said, Awakening to Your Life's Purpose. I said, that's it?

That's good. So Awakening to Your Life's Purpose already contains the answer because your life's purpose, your inner purpose, your primordial primary purpose is awakening.

[Speaker 2] (1:25:19 - 1:25:26)

One of the things that Reverend Paul Hasselbeck always says at the end of his program is to go out and be the best Christ you can be.

[Speaker 1] (1:25:26 - 1:25:26)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:25:27 - 1:25:29)

Our primary purpose.

[Speaker 1] (1:25:29 - 1:30:07)

Yes. The primary purpose is to be here as the awakened consciousness. Present.

Conscious. And let that energy off, which is spiritual energy, which is a very fine vibration. Ultimately all energy is one, but the spiritual is the finest vibration.

To let that flow into this world through whatever you do. And what you do is secondary. Primary is always how you do what you do.

So it doesn't necessarily mean that you need to find something great, some great enterprise, creating some great structure in this world. Some people will do that. But the primary thing is what energy flows into every little thing you do.

And even if you're engaged in some great enterprise, even if your name is Oprah, for example, every great thing consists of a hundred little steps that you take every moment. And even for Oprah, at some point, she steps onto the stage. One step, two, three, walks to a chair, sits in a chair, looks at the person, a question comes.

Spontaneously a lot of questions. Enormous ability. She has to tune into the other person and then the right question comes.

Funny comments come spontaneously. All these things that developed in her over 30 years of practice. And so that's one example.

Many people look for some significant life purpose. But the first question is, have you made every little action that you take significant? There's no point in looking for some great, abstract, significant thing.

What's the great purpose of my life? And you neglect to pay attention to what is at hand, whatever you are doing now, in search for something significant and believing that this moment is not significant. You're just looking for the significant thing.

And then, of course, you're not going to find it because you're neglecting the very foundation for all significance, which is this moment. So are you getting this moment right? Is this whatever you're doing at this moment done with presence, with attention?

Are you honoring this moment? And if you're honoring this moment, even if you don't know exactly where you want to go, if you honor this moment and see this moment as primary, then it's much more likely that if you are, if it is your destiny to create something out there in this world, it will come much more quickly. Even if you're doing something at this moment that you perhaps wouldn't want to do for the rest of your life.

Maybe you got a job that doesn't pay well and is repetitive. And yet, this is what is now.

You can be, if you're in a negative state there, at this moment doing that, it's much less likely that you will be finding your true life purpose.

So always come to make the present moment your friend. That's the foundation. If you're friendly with the present moment, then you're friendly with life.

Then life comes and will offer you whatever is most appropriate for you, which may have all kinds of things, working with people, working with plants, working with animals, working with structures, working with art, working with writing, whatever it is, in whatever form. And you may use perhaps already what you are doing, but as you bring presence into it, it becomes empowered and deeper. Let's say you're a hairdresser and you're quite good, but then suddenly you realize how important the present moment is and you pay attention to every moment, the person who is there, the hair, the doing, the words come, which means what you do will become not only very good, that you're a very good hairdresser, it means another dimension will come into what you do when people come to you.

[Speaker 2] (1:30:07 - 1:30:09)

Do you ever get tired of being so aware?

[Speaker 1] (1:30:10 - 1:30:11)

Ha ha ha!

[Speaker 2] (1:30:13 - 1:30:20)

I mean, when I think about every step, you know, being present with every step, with every snip of the scissors, it sounds like it could be kind of exhausting.

[Speaker 1] (1:30:23 - 1:30:52)

There's not perhaps an equal intensity all throughout your day. It's when you're engaged. You just zone out.

Well, of course, one gets tired sometimes, and there's a point at which although you endeavor to live above thought, always a moment comes late at night, or sometimes for me in the afternoon when it's time to take a nap. A moment comes around 5 o'clock.

[Speaker 4] (1:30:53 - 1:30:54)

Uh-oh!

[Speaker 1] (1:30:58 - 1:31:28)

When my level of consciousness falls below thought. And there's a little nap, and then wake up again. Oh, and then it's fine.

And then I go about things you've had. So, sometimes... At the moment, I don't have television, so that doesn't work.

Sometimes we watch films. We rent DVDs.

[Speaker 2] (1:31:28 - 1:31:43)

Well, that was the next question. Someone said, You are such an enlightened soul. I'm very grateful for your awareness, your wisdom, and your willingness to share your insights with the world.

Just out of curiosity, what do you do for fun? Ha ha ha! Do you have any hobbies?

Ha ha ha!

[Speaker 1] (1:31:47 - 1:32:31)

Well, it doesn't sound very interesting. I like walking out in nature every day. I go for a walk in the forest every day when I'm at home with a dog.

That's fun. My hobby for a long time was photography. And at the moment, I'm trying to switch from...

I'm always late with technology. At the moment, I'm trying to switch from the old-fashioned film photography, which I know very well, to digital, which I don't know anything about. But I have a little digital camera now.

I'm trying to take photos and master that.

[Speaker 2] (1:32:31 - 1:32:32)

Capturing moments?

[Speaker 1] (1:32:33 - 1:32:33)

What?

[Speaker 2] (1:32:33 - 1:32:34)

You're capturing moments.

[Speaker 1] (1:32:34 - 1:33:29)

Yes. What I capture most, what I do with the camera when I use it, I walk around nature with the camera and I look. There's no thought involved.

And I look at some, whatever. There's little, relatively insignificant things, usually leaves, trees, flowers, blades of grass, stones, whatever, or clouds. And at some point, there's

something that particularly conveys the sense of divine presence that's there, the sacredness of nature.

And then I walk around a bit more, looking. And then there's something else. So it's not so much to capture something for the past.

It's to capture the sacredness. I'm not a master photographer. It's just a joyful thing to do, that's all.

[Speaker 2] (1:33:29 - 1:33:37)

Do you email us some pictures? We'll put them up on the website. One with a digital camera, I'll help you.

[Speaker 1] (1:33:39 - 1:33:45)

There are a few pictures in the little booklet that comes with a DVD of my Fintan retreat.

[Speaker 2] (1:33:45 - 1:33:46)

Oh, very nice.

[Speaker 1] (1:33:46 - 1:33:49)

And that has some photos that I took of nature.

[Speaker 2] (1:33:49 - 1:34:27)

Lovely, lovely. Well, speaking of pictures, one thing that many of our listeners are talking about, and there's many books coming out on the topic of treasure maps, the idea of taking pictures of things that we want to manifest and putting them up in front of us. This question is from one of our listeners on our online community.

He says, My husband and I happened to be starting a treasure map when we first started reading your book. I found it really difficult to continue the treasure map, sort of announcing to the universe all the things that I hope to see manifest in my life and, at the same time, stay in the present moment. Do you think the idea of treasure mapping is inconsistent with being in the now moment?

[Speaker 1] (1:34:28 - 1:41:14)

I don't think it is, because the only time when you can practice it is in the now. But the question is whether you have found the foundation for all power in the present moment, or whether you are still looking to the future for some kind of self-fulfillment, for the future to finally give you the sense that you have arrived, that you are somebody, that you are being recognized, that finally you can feel, at some point when you have the house and the car, that finally you can feel abundant when that comes, because right

now you are not feeling abundant.

Why are you not feeling abundant? Because you are denying the now. So, you have to first find the foundation for abundance, because abundance has very little to do with the number of things in your life.

Abundance is the state of being. Abundance arises out of life itself, the being of life, which life is being, the I am. Being and I am is the same thing, it just sounds like different words, because I am is the first person singular of the infinitive, to be, for those who have missed grammar at school.

The infinitive is to be, the first person singular is I am, so it's the same word. So, when we talk about being, we talk about how do you experience being, you can only experience being as the I am. And the I am is the foundation for all abundance, it's the realization of the fullness of being in yourself, which has nothing to do with the number of objects in your life, so you find the fullness of being, Jesus pointed to it when he said, I want you to have life, and I want you to have the fullness of life.

In some Bibles it's translated as abundant life. I want you to have abundant life, he said. Now, if you look deeply, you will see very soon that he is not talking about many possessions, he is talking about the sense of the fullness of being in yourself.

Not shopping malls, not that he wasn't prophesying the arrival of shopping malls, but finding that present moment, that deeply satisfying sense of beingness that comes when you enter the present moment fully and become friendly with now, go deeply into now, that's the vertical dimension of life, the now, which to most people doesn't exist, they only know the horizontal, past, future, things, where am I, where can I find myself, I need to attain this, and then they might say, I want to make a treasure map, and then finally I can attain that. And so often, of course, people are not successful quite often with their treasure maps, because there is the erroneous belief that they need to achieve something that's over there in the future, that they need to get that in order to feel the fulfillment and the fulfilled sense of self. And even if they do get what they want, it will still not lead them to the fulfillment.

Even if they do get the house and the car, they may sometimes do, even if they do get it, but they haven't found the fullness of life that can only be found in the now, then for a little while they are elated, I made it, I made it, and then they sit there in the big house and say, OK, what now, where do I go from here, OK, what do I, I need, I need to invite lots of people so that they can reaffirm to me that I'm somebody, that my house is bigger than theirs, and so you do that for a while, and then that doesn't work either. And so you come to an emptiness when you, often it has happened with people who have achieved materially what they wanted to achieve, and yet they still feel empty.

And sometimes it's at that point, either they become even more miserable, or they begin

taking drugs just to don't feel the pain anymore of the unfulfilled life, and you can't fool yourself anymore when you have achieved materially almost everything, and you're still unhappy, where can you go from there? You can't fool yourself that even more houses would make you finally happy, or some try even that. So the foundation is the present moment, and the fullness of life now, and so when you feel the fullness, and then you look at a treasure map, you are now, the approach is very different, you are playing, there's a playfulness in the world of form.

You are playing because you are in this world of form, and part of being in this world of form is to interact with the forms of life. And why not try this out, see if I can manifest, not to find some fulfillment, but as a joyful, playful game with form. And then you look at your treasure map, and you feel, whatever it is you are looking at, the house, you feel totally fulfilled already in that moment.

Obtaining the house couldn't possibly lead you to greater fulfillment. This happened to me, I drew spontaneously a picture, a circle on a sheet of paper before I ever wrote a book, and that said, book. It came to me one day spontaneously with colors, I drew a circle, book, and then I wrote, this was not so much me wanting to write a book, as something in me expressing what it wanted, the consciousness.

And I wrote, translating into many languages, changing the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

[Speaker 2] (1:41:15 - 1:41:16)

Millions.

[Speaker 1] (1:41:16 - 1:47:06)

Millions, I didn't know that. And so it all came to pass, I had completely forgotten about this sheet of paper, and a few years ago I unpacked things that had been forwarded from England, a trunk, and I looked through it, and I saw this old paper. And there was the power of now, and I looked in amazement, it had all come to pass.

But I didn't want, this was so much a reality, this sheet of paper, that I already felt the fullness and the power of the power of now. I felt it already there. I didn't feel any greater or better when the book was out.

It was the same, the same feeling. So if you can feel the power, the unmanifested power, and then you can look at certain forms, and play with forms. What flows into the manifestation is the unmanifested power, that expresses itself in many ways.

One of the ways in which the unmanifested power, the one power, the one life, can express itself, and wants to express itself, because this is a universe that creates form continuously, on so many levels. Billions of life forms. So on that level, the universe

wants to experience form.

So you are part of that. You can take part in that game, the universe is the game of creating forms, and enjoying forms. And so you can do that, if the foundation is the present moment.

And then you are not dependent on your creation, and you realize, of course, whatever you create at some point, it will leave you again, or you leave it. And that's fine. So you are not dependent on the outer form, to give you a sense of fulfillment.

Only then can you be successful at truly manifesting. So that's the finding the power first within yourself. There is, in this world, there are two movements.

One is the outgoing movement of the universe, which is the creation of form. Greater and greater differentiation. The universe, they say, they may be right on some level, not on the deepest level.

It started from a zero point of oneness. The astronomers say there was a big bang, and the zero point, and nobody can say what was there before then. Before then, they say there was nothing.

Very strange. So there was out of the nothingness came the thingness of the world. The multitude of things.

What the ancient Chinese texts call the 10,000 things. They didn't realize at that time it's billions of things. And so there's the outward movement of the universe, the creation of form, and the wanting to experience the form.

But there is another movement in the universe, which is the return to the source. The two movements are there. The forms go out, but there's also, and every human being has the two movements inside him or her.

One is the outward movement into creation, and one is the return movement home to the source, to the oneness. Which, in essence, is the spiritual dimension. The spiritual dimension is the return movement of the universe, and the universe also wants that.

It wants to know itself in its essence. It not only wants to create forms and lose itself in the forms. That's part of the game.

It also wants to find itself after having lost itself. It wants to find itself and know itself deeply for the first time. And this actually is happening through the human form, and probably through other forms in the universe, the same movement, because as above, so below.

So you are an expression of this universal, cosmic, two-fold movement. The outer and the return home. The outgoing and the return home.

And you are in between these two. So don't lose yourself in the outgoing. That's a great danger, and this has happened to a large part of humanity.

They lost themselves in the outgoing cycle. But ultimately, even that the universe wanted, because nothing happens that the universe doesn't want. So you lose yourself in the outgoing until finally the outgoing becomes so problematic and so differentiated, and then the return starts back to the source.

And then you can actually live balancing the two, connected to the source, and this, I believe, is the new earth, the new reality that's being created in this dimension. And humans can create that, which is create form without losing their connectedness with the essence of being, with God. And then that could lead to a kind of dimension that would be absolute bliss, also temporary, nothing lasts, but this would be a beautiful dimension when on the planet humans live, who create things, but don't lose their connectedness with being.

So then you could say that it's conscious creation rather than unconscious creation. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:47:07 - 1:47:44)

Well, our guest today is Eckhart Tolle. Eckhart, thank you so much for being with us this hour on The Leading Edge. I'm Mindy Odlin.

If you feel nourished and uplifted by this program or any of our programs on UnityFM, we invite you to make a contribution and help us continue to be this voice, to bring this voice of truth and awakening to the planet, to the planet Earth. And we thank you, Eckhart, for being here. More information is available online at www.eckharttolle.com.

Thank you for tuning in. Thank you for being a part of The Leading Edge and for being a part of the voice of an awakening world. God bless.

[Speaker 1] (1:47:44 - 1:47:45)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (1:47:45 - 1:47:55)

Thank you. Thank you, Eckhart Tolle. Thank you.

Applause Music